

**REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE****Form Approved**  
**OMB No. 0704-0188**

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<b>1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)</b> 25-03-2010		<b>2. REPORT TYPE</b> Master of Military Studies Research Paper		<b>3. DATES COVERED (From - To)</b> September 2009 - April 2010	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b> THE MILITARY PROFESSIONAL AS AN APOLITICAL ADVISOR				<b>5a. CONTRACT NUMBER</b> N/A	
				<b>5b. GRANT NUMBER</b> N/A	
				<b>5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER</b> N/A	
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> Major Jarrod Stoutenborough				<b>5d. PROJECT NUMBER</b> N/A	
				<b>5e. TASK NUMBER</b> N/A	
				<b>5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER</b> N/A	
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> USMC Command and Staff College Marine Corps University 2076 South Street Quantico, VA 22134-5068				<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b> N/A	
<b>9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> N/A				<b>10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)</b> N/A	
				<b>11. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER</b> N/A	
<b>12. DISTRIBUTION AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Unlimited					
<b>13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b> N/A					
<b>14. ABSTRACT</b> Civil-military relations is vital to the effective integration of policy and military strategy and any friction in the bond between the government and military can lead to an ineffective national security policy. Civil-military relations are not currently a focus of the military's professional military education program below the rank of Colonel, and the development of professional competence in national security affairs is not part of the standard career path of today's military leader. During the current war on terrorism, our young Company Grade Officers are being forced to work with civilian counterparts and deal with frequent public testimonies from senior military Officers without any previous exposure to the military's role in the development of national security policy. Today's military must take an aggressive approach to educate its leaders on the theoretical and historical background of civil-military relations in order to prepare them for the personality-driven challenge of serving as an apolitical military advisor. Continued political involvement by military leaders will negatively impact the legitimacy and status of the military as a professional institution.					
<b>15. SUBJECT TERMS</b> Military Advisor, A-Political Military, Professional development					
<b>16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:</b>			<b>17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b> UU	<b>18. NUMBER OF PAGES</b> 20	<b>19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON</b> Marine Corps University / Command and Staff College
<b>a. REPORT</b> Unclass	<b>b. ABSTRACT</b> Unclass	<b>c. THIS PAGE</b> Unclass			<b>19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code)</b> (703) 784-3330 (Admin Office)

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Command and Staff College  
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**MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES**

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**TITLE: THE MILITARY PROFESSIONAL AS AN APOLITICAL ADVISOR**

**SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES**

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## Executive Summary

**Title:** The Military Professional as an Apolitical Advisor

**Author:** Major Jarrod Stoutenborough, United States Marine Corps

**Thesis:** To shape norms conducive to effective civil-military relations requires increased professionalism by U.S. military leaders in order to effectively serve as political advisors.

**Discussion:** The nation is adjusting to a new Presidential Administration which coincides with continued involvement in a sustained war on terrorism. Civil-military relations is vital to the effective integration of policy and military strategy and any friction in the bond between the government and military can lead to an ineffective national security policy. Civil-military relations are not currently a focus of the military's professional military education program below the rank of Colonel, and the development of professional competence in national security affairs is not part of the standard career path of today's military leader. During the current war on terrorism, our young Company Grade Officers are being forced to work with civilian counterparts and deal with frequent public testimonies from senior military Officers without any previous exposure to the military's role in the development of national security policy.

**Conclusion:** Today's military must take an aggressive approach to educate its leaders on the theoretical and historical background of civil-military relations in order to prepare them for the personality-driven challenge of serving as a military advisor. Continued political involvement by military leaders will negatively impact the legitimacy and status of the military as a professional institution.

## *Preface*

During the most recent Presidential election, I was amazed at how many of my peers favored one candidate over another and expressed outward concern of their potential service under certain candidates. Does the candidate really matter to a true military professional, and am I less of a professional for sharing their concerns? If my concerns are a detriment to my personal professionalism, then the recent political activity by active duty and retired senior leadership must surely be a detriment to the military's institutional professionalism. In order to form a more educated assessment of what is proper professional conduct of a military officer and the military institution as a whole, it was necessary for me to explore the military's required role in civil-military relations. My research exposed me to many theories that helped explain why it is important to define and understand civil-military relationships, as well as how these relationships are crucial to security of the United States.

Without the assistance of Dr. Brad Wineman, my research would have lacked the appropriate focus and results, and he helped me expose and address a significant shortfall in my own professional development. Additionally, the entire staff at the Marine Corps Gray Research Center has been instrumental in my quest for timely and relevant references.

The unwavering support of my wife Cindy was instrumental in my ability to complete the required research for this project. She consistently flexed the family schedule to accommodate my academic requirements, and her devotion of time and effort to proofread the products of my research warranted timely, effective feedback throughout the process.

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## INTRODUCTION

When a military service member takes their oath of office to “support and defend the Constitution” and “follow the orders of the President of the United States,” they have also committed to a military mission that requires subordination to elected political leaders. Current civil-military relations are adjusting to a new Administration and continued involvement in the first extended military conflict fought with a voluntary force in over 100 years, and the military’s ability to combat both conventional and non-conventional security threats will be dependent upon the stabilization of those relations.<sup>1</sup> There is no blueprint for this stabilization due to the personality of the nation’s leaders, the varying level of strengths of governmental institutions, the dynamic influence of the civilian populace, and the organizational characterization of the government and military. To effectively serve as advisors in the development of the nation’s future security policies, today’s military leader must enhance their professional development by understanding their advisor role, the theories that outline that role, and the historical context that shapes it. This paper will analyze the theoretical and historical factors that influences today’s relationship between the nation’s civilian and military leaders, and address current issues in civil-military relations and the measures required for the military to effectively manage the critical relationship with its civilian leaders. To shape norms conducive to effective civil-military relations requires increased professionalism by U.S. military leaders in order to effectively serve as advisors to the nation’s policy makers.

## THEORETICAL CONTEXT

No discussion regarding civil-military relations can begin without highlighting the Carl von Clausewitz concept that military strategy and politics will often merge creating a situation where the military point of view will always be subordinate to the political one.<sup>2</sup> He emphasized

that the military leader must assume that the political objectives are aimed at the interests of the entire nation and that military advice would always have political implications.<sup>3</sup> Clausewitz not only provides today's military leader with a detailed analysis of the operational art of war, he establishes that the civilian policy maker is "wholly and exclusively entitled to decide which events and trends are best for the objectives of the war." The military leader is obligated to provide advisement and accurate estimates regarding the military situation to ensure that the course of military events is read correctly.<sup>4</sup> This declaration of the military's role as a subordinate advisor to politically generated policy still serves as a foundation for today's civil-military relations.

Giving credit to Clausewitz for "formulating the first theoretical rationale for the military profession" and "first theoretical justification for civilian control," Samuel Huntington believed that the military should remain autonomous from political affairs in order to minimize the complications created by civilian control of the military.<sup>5</sup> Widely considered the pioneer of civil-military relations theory, Huntington provides today's military leader with a theoretical framework on the complications of military involvement in political affairs and today's issue of trying to assure sufficient military influence to protect a nation while maintaining civilian authority.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, his three primary functions of the military man establish a common expectation between civilians and military leaders. First, he or she serves as a representative of the condition of the country's military security by informing the authorities of the state on their necessary requirements based off the detailed threat analysis of the potential military adversaries. The military leaders have the right and the duty to present their views to both the executive or legislative branch, which are charged with the apportionment of resources between the military and other claims. It is important for military leaders to demonstrate discretion and respect during



the presentation of their views as any perceived abuse of this function will result in friction at many levels of the civil-military structure.<sup>7</sup> Secondly, he or she advises the civilian policy maker on the military implications of all proposed courses of action. The military leader is not expected to judge which course of action he or she considers most desirable, as this will only damage the civil-military relationship. Finally, the military leader is expected implement policy decisions with respect to military security even if it is a decision which they did not prefer during the policy development phase.

In their creation of the Constitution, the Founding Fathers established the power to declare war in Congress in Article I and the President as the Commander-in-Chief in Article II; effectively dividing legal control of the national military between the Executive and Legislative Branches. Designed to establish “reason and persuasion rather than coercion and violence” in the determination of public policies, this division of control can potentially place today’s military leaders in the middle of a political struggle between two branches of the Government.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, the obligations of military leaders to Congress are not clearly defined and this creates further tension in civil-military relations and gives today’s military leader another variable to consider during the conduct of their advisor duties.<sup>9</sup>

In his book, *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations*, Peter Feaver describes civil-military relations as the product of a strategic interaction between civilian principals and military agents. His theoretical study on the daily interaction between political leaders and their military advisors introduces the idea that unquestioned subordination from the military is not guaranteed.<sup>10</sup> The civilian leader determines the extent of military responsibilities and authority that will be delegated and whether to listen to their military advisors and Feaver’s theory provides valuable insight into how the military leader can help

shape that relationship.<sup>11</sup> His examples of “shirking” which include overestimating potential costs and casualties, constraining options, or leaking material to political allies to undercut elected officials blur the line of military subordination to their civilian leaders and are difficult for inexperienced civilian leaders to distinguish from professional military behavior due to their limited interaction with military leaders.<sup>12</sup>

Douglas Bland’s states that political and military leaders share responsibility for the decisions regarding the ends and means of defense, the arrangement of defense resources and internal responsibilities, armed forces and society, and the employment of forces. It is vital for today’s military leaders to understand the dual nature of these responsibilities, and the good will that can be developed with their political partners while effectively serving the institutional interests of the military leaders.<sup>13</sup>

Rebecca Schiff’s concordance theory emphasizes dialogue, accommodation, and shared values or objectives among the military, political elites, and society and that a social and cultural perspective is required in civil-military relations.<sup>14</sup> Schiff also states that American citizens just want to know that the military is going to be there to protect them and they do not desire a military prominence in their daily life.<sup>15</sup> This theory reinforces the Clausewitz paradoxical trinity which describes an effective balance between the politicians, military leaders and the civilian populace.<sup>16</sup> Today’s military leaders must be prepared to effectively balance the fluctuating line between their security mission and the desires of the civilian populace through constant coordination with their legitimate civilian leadership.

The strategic effectiveness of established national policies is impacted by relationships separate from the one between the military advisor and his civilian leader, and it is vital for today’s military leader to understand these relationships. The first relationship is between the

military leaders and civilian elites such as elected and appointed civilians in the Executive and Legislative Branches, university researchers and faculty, business leaders, and members of the media.<sup>17</sup> The second relationship is that of the military with society. There have been many studies regarding a growing gap between the military and the society it protects, and the military must monitor any perceived isolation from the civilian populace as misunderstanding and mistrust can impact its ability to recruit and maintain a combat-ready force.<sup>18</sup> The next relationship, between society and the political elites, serves as a mechanism to keep the public informed on national security policy and the instruments of power used to execute it. At the forefront of this relationship is the concern of the decreasing numbers of political elites with prior military experience, as this can lead to more outward military objections to the civilian-directed policy if not properly managed by the military leaders.<sup>19</sup> The next relationship is within the military between its senior and junior leaders, and it plays a vital role in the professional development of the military as the Company Commanders of today will be the senior advisors of tomorrow. Through strong communication and effective management of the influences stemming from the relationships mentioned above, the civilian policy maker and military advisor must commit to their distinct professional obligation to project an outwardly unified policy.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Today's civil-military relations are impacted by attitudes and experiences resulting from previous relationships between the nation's civilian and military leaders. In his highly acclaimed *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies that Led to Vietnam*, H. R. McMaster suggests that the Joint Chiefs of Staff were not loyal to their troops and not honest to their fellow citizens and elected officials. Additionally, he suggests that their squabbling over "bureaucratic advantage" allowed the civilian policy makers

to devise a faulted military strategy.<sup>20</sup> With President Johnson keeping the costs and consequences of the War out of the daily lives of the American public, the military advisors assisted his deception efforts by remaining silent in all forums prior to the time when the decision was made.<sup>21</sup> Former Secretary of State Colin Powell stated that “as a corporate entity, the military failed to talk straight to its political superiors or itself by not going directly to the Secretary of Defense or the President and stating, “This war is unwinnable the way we are fighting it.”<sup>22</sup> Determined to never let this happen again, military leaders considered it an obligation to voice their objections to proposed policies which placed their concern for another military disaster ahead of any disruption to civil-military relations. Presented with an opportunity to explore how the military advice could be more valuable to the civilian leader, the military focused on trying to control the policy making decisions. No matter who should be blamed for the problems in Vietnam, it is clear how dysfunctional civil-military relations can impact an entire nation’s dedication to a military effort. Today’s military leader is faced with the challenge of determining their professional obligation to speak out against what they consider unsatisfactory policy, and the War in Vietnam provides a framework for further analysis before making that decision.<sup>23</sup>

The perceived interference and failure of the civilian policy makers in Vietnam was fresh in the minds of the entire civil-military team during the planning and execution of the Gulf War over 20 years later as President Bush honored Colin Powell’s “demand for freedom of action to do the job once the political decision had been made.”<sup>24</sup> The Gulf War was a military success, but the lack of political involvement in the conflict termination activities forced the military leaders to make policy decisions they were not prepared for during their professional training blurring the line between operations and strategy.<sup>25</sup> Civil-military relations during that period

were considered favorable but today's military leader should analyze that era for an emphasis on the importance of managing the amount of authority given to the military leader regarding policy development.

The relationship between President Bill Clinton and the military occurred when the post-Vietnam military leaders rose to prominence in the wake of the President's perceived "strategic amateurism and privileged absence from service."<sup>26</sup> President Clinton's Administration included a generation of civilian leaders with limited military experience, military leaders with Gulf War experience, increased interservice rivalry within the military, military force downsizing due to the lack of a Soviet threat, and policy debates surrounding homosexuals in the military.<sup>27</sup> The military's increased influence on policy decisions during the Clinton Administration created a perceived alliance with the Republican political party and it projected a politically affiliated military organization. Today's military leader can utilize the policy decisions regarding U.S. involvement in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo to analyze the impact of the military's increased influence on national policy and its inability to educate its civilian leaders.<sup>28</sup> With limited members of today's civilian leadership having military experience or experience interacting with military officers, it is vital for the military advisors to effectively manage likely civilian deference to military preferences.<sup>29</sup>

Determined to re-establish civilian control relinquished by the Clinton Administration Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld quickly established his Constitutional authority, and he promulgated his "Rumsfeld Rules" which outlined his duty to exercise control over the military and get involved in all military issues as required.<sup>30</sup> While Secretary Rumsfeld had conflicts with many senior military leaders and civilian officials, none was more reflective of the existing civil-military relationship than his public interaction with General Eric Shinseki, the Army Chief of

Staff. General Shinseki met the obligations of his three primary duties outlined by Huntington, and there is little he could have done differently to improve his relationship with the Secretary of Defense. Ultimately, Secretary Rumsfeld undermined the credibility of the “face of the Army” by making his relationship with one of his military advisors a political one.<sup>31</sup> He created an environment that discouraged military advisors from sticking to the proper channels to voice their military concerns. Today’s military leader must manage these types of civil-military relations to avoid war plans that lack necessary advisement input resulting in troops being sent to fight an adversary without adequate force to decisively defeat the enemy and hold the country afterwards.<sup>32</sup> Today’s military leader must also recognize that the Barack Obama administration is faced with repairing these relations while dealing with military leaders and politicians that will carry a developed suspicion of one another’s actions.<sup>33</sup>

## DEFINITIONS

War serves as an instrument of policy and the military leader’s advisor role is established through their expertise on all military matters. The military leader will always assume that war is imminent and is expected to emphasize the magnitude and immediacy of the estimated security threats. Additionally, the military leader is expected to advise his or her political leaders on the requirements to maintain a force that is capable of defeating those threats, and it is the military leader’s responsibility to advise the political leaders if a proposed political objective is beyond the nation’s military means.<sup>34</sup> It is vital for today’s military leader to master the ability to provide professional recommendations consistent with Feaver’s “give and take” exchange as opposed to a personal or political objection.

Huntington defines the three components of the military’s professionalism as its expertise in the management and organization of violence, its responsibility to the State, and its

“corporate-loyalty” to its fellow military members.<sup>35</sup> The establishment of the military as a profession is no longer an issue, but the credibility of the military profession in the eyes of politicians remains vital to the effectiveness of today’s military-relations. It is assumed that senior military advisors bring expertise on the national security process and that they know more than their civilian counterparts regarding the military instruments of policy. This requires years of education and apprenticeship before the military professional can establish the trust of its civil partner and effectively serve the State.<sup>36</sup>

The military professional’s dedication to his or her professional competence can lead to three types of professional development within the military. A military service professional gains experience in billets within their service to become superior advocates for the needs of his or her service. The joint professional is experienced in the operations, doctrine, training, and all other areas across the five services. Lastly, the national security professional develops his or her understanding of foreign and security policy in the U. S. Government.

Since the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986, the joint professional has grown throughout the military services, but the national security professional has experienced limited growth due to the close political ties and the lack of command opportunities.<sup>37</sup> Service on a staff in the White House, Congress, or the Office of the Secretary of Defense is often viewed as deviation from an accepted professional career path due to its affiliation with politics even though military professionals have long been evaluated for their ability to carry out policy when called upon by the State.<sup>38</sup>

Due to the military’s legitimate use of organized violence as an agent of the State, any perceived political alliance, or partisanship, will serve as a detriment to the military as a profession.<sup>39</sup> Today’s military leader is tasked with managing the boundaries between the

professional advisor and policy maker, and their involvement in politics make it difficult to manage their responsibility to the State while maintaining their loyalty to their military profession.<sup>40</sup> Richard Kohn emphasizes that the most important challenge faced by military professionals is to effectively connect war to policy, and they will be forced to do this while demonstrating the intellect to wage war against changing threats, remain separate from partisan politics while building relations with its political leaders, and maintain the “honor, integrity, honesty, and self-sacrifice of the officer corps” which is vital to leading on the battlefield.<sup>41</sup>

Civilian control of the military preserves democratic values and demonstrates obedience to the nationally accepted Constitutional principles. Additionally, civilian control is designed to allow the experts in persuasion, or civilian political leaders, an opportunity to resolve conflict before calling upon the experts in the management and organization of violence, or military.<sup>42</sup> Civilian control legitimizes military actions and how the military handles its role as a subordinate is more important to civil-military relations than who is in charge.<sup>43</sup> Huntington suggests that the only way to have a professional military is for civilians to lead through the objective control model which is designed to provide the State with a ready force that will execute orders as given to them from the recognized authority of their civilian bosses.<sup>44</sup> His implications for not maintaining an apolitical military are prerequisites for today’s military leader to effectively address the current debate regarding his or her accepted political activity.

Being subjected to the instability of the political structure cannot always be avoided, and the subjective model of civilian leadership outlines a civilian leader’s involvement in details of military organization, doctrine, leader development and selection, and operations. In his support for the subjective model in today’s civil-military environment, Matthew Moten states that “there is no such thing as pure military advice” or a solid line between political and military matters.<sup>45</sup>



Additionally, supporters of the subjective model believe that today's battlefield requires military leaders to make decisions in the political realm and that the objective model is inconsistent with the views of Clausewitz. No matter which model is in effect, war will remain subordinated to politics and the military professional's management of that subordination will play a vital role in the development of strategy. The senior military leader is responsible for ensuring that the unity between war and politics is reserved by achieving victory that serves the larger purpose of the State.<sup>46</sup>

Inherent problems will exist in all civil-military relationships due to the dynamics between the relationships and personalities and their roles in the theories outlined previously in this paper. A perceived over-extension of the socially acceptable military power will create the political need to limit the power of the military resulting in friction between the nation's civilian and military leaders. In addition to managing the perception of military power, today's military leader must also guard against politicians who abuse their authority to further partisan interests and their own power.

## SITUATION

Every public statement regarding national security made by the nation's political leaders is followed by the American public's anticipation of what the military leaders think of the newly stated policy. When civil-military relations is functioning correctly, the military leaders' opinion will not leverage any debate, as it is widely understood that the security strategy includes military goals designed to effectively meet the political means. Polarized political parties produce a more pronounced military political affiliation which contributes to the diminishment of its professionalism.<sup>47</sup> Today's military officers now vote at a higher percentage and identify themselves with a political party at a higher percentage than the American people. The

breaching of the apolitical line has become so prevalent in today's military that Secretary of Defense Robert Gates instructed graduates of the Naval and Air Force academies about their commitment to being apolitical.<sup>48</sup>

Political groups of military veterans and serving officers damages the organizational interests of the military as a whole due to its association with other public institutions which are not trusted. Political affiliation also strains the trust between political leaders and their advisors, as well as complicating the capacity of the political leaders to execute their role as the convening authority on national security issues.<sup>49</sup> Additionally, political affiliation is a "cancer" that diverts the military from its expected professional competencies in the warfighting realm, as well as negatively impacting morale and decreasing the public confidence in the objectivity and loyalty of the military.<sup>50</sup>

This political affiliation is not always by choice as civilian leaders will often try to add credibility to their policy by asking the military advisor to make a statement or simply stand next to them during the announcement. Members of the Legislative Branch will attempt to place military leaders in debates over national security in order to leverage their control and exploit any perceived divisions between the civilian leader and his military advisor.<sup>51</sup> Additionally, military members are targeted by minority political parties in order to take advantage of the military's high standing in society. Regardless of whether military leaders volunteer or are forced to participate in the political process; their military professionalism is compromised due to the public perception of their partisanship.

As stated previously, society is normally content to stay out of military affairs due to the existing trust in the military's professional capability to address their security interest, but military involvement in political affairs has created concerns that have forced members of

society to interject. If the military is viewed as just another interest group, they will lose the respect and support of the American people, money from Congress, and recruits from American society. In turn, this will damage the trust between them and their political leaders and their military professionalism.

Directly linked to partisanship is the large number of retired flag-officers that publicly endorse presidential candidates. Despite having the rights of any U. S. citizen, these retired officers, due to their earned prestige in the military, represent the views of the active duty component to society. They remain mentors and a voice of the military, so their endorsement influences the active duty forces as well as society's view of the military. Their public criticism of current policy makers creates a high level of cynicism and division within the military profession which can be damaging to junior officers during the formative years in their careers.<sup>52</sup> Not only does the retired officer promote political activity throughout the active forces, they fuel any existing concerns shared by the American public. Furthermore, the endorsed politicians send the message that it is acceptable for the military officers to take sides on political issues.<sup>53</sup> To the contrary, all commissioned officers are expected to display virtue, honor, patriotism, and subordination throughout their commission, and retirement does not equate to a resigned commission.

When a military leader speaks out regarding a political issue, they become a spokesman for the military, and every military leader that voices his or her concerns publicly diminishes the military professional's political sterility and neutrality. A common defense of speaking out is supported by the idea of providing the American public with expertise that is lacking in the public testimonies of their elected officials. While there is merit to ensuring that elected officials are held accountable, this will destroy the trust and communication essential to effective civil-

military relations. In response to their concern over the public dispute, civilian officials will seek to appoint military leaders that are regarded as “loyal” to the current administration as opposed to professional, competent, honest advisors creating an environment of limited dialogue and little objectivity in the civil-military relations.<sup>54</sup> To further impede the distinction of the military professional, the media means used to produce the public message will always come with its own set of affiliations and standing in society. Even though history suggests that the time is right for the military to assume a more prominent role in civil-military relations, outspoken military leaders do nothing but damage the potential for a more functional relationship.

The military consumes a large portion of the national budget, represents virtually all geographic regions throughout the country, and is a prominent voice in the media.<sup>55</sup> Due to these factors, the military profession is at risk of becoming a separate social institution which will be called upon to weigh-in on its views regarding current policies. The military’s current approval rating compared to other professions is directly related to the civilian population’s trust that the military’s only agenda is to keep the nation safe. Its establishment as a separate social institution will increase the perception of existing agendas separate from the nation’s security and will diminish the nation’s trust of the military.

The military is also experiencing a rise in popularity and prestige of its military leaders much like the one which played a large role in the military’s rise of power in the post World War II era.<sup>56</sup> While it remains to be seen if this era will produce a political figure as popular as Dwight Eisenhower or Douglas MacArthur, the American public’s constant search for a new hero could lead to that. The military’s increased role in society subjects it to social imperatives established by social forces, ideologies, and prominent institutions, thus placing the military in a position forced to replace its professional values with those of society.<sup>57</sup> While the influence in

society can benefit the military, prolonged establishment as a social force will embody its interests in the existing political parties and government institutions, completely undermining its role as a profession. The founding fathers focused on “the interior structure of the government” and not its external relations to society. The checks and balances in the interior structure are designed to keep each entity in its proper place, and the military’s direct relationship with society will offset the balance between the political system and society and further complicate civil-military relations as both sides are forced to deal with additional variables.<sup>58</sup>

The current war on terrorism has tested the nation’s institutions and leaders, as well as strained civil-military relations. The friction that existed before the war has been magnified, and each of the issues discussed previously have been brought to the forefront as the nation continues to address the security threat. The extended nature of this war has created nationwide concerns about the budget, the readiness of the force, and the strategy for victory, and the military leaders’ estimates of the situation are being raised in public forums representing the ground truth in the eyes of the American public. While the military has improved its ability to train its leaders on the appropriate responses to questions with political implications, no answer can satisfy all people and lack of speculation based on limited knowledge can often be perceived as lacking the sincerity that the American public expects from its military. With more American people serving overseas or being impacted by family members serving in the military, the war has sparked increased awareness, curiosity, and concern that will often dominate a public appearance by a military leader. Due to the competing domestic interests in the United States, the current war on terrorism has also forced military leaders to publicly defend the political decisions made by their civilian leaders to the American public and Congress. It is difficult to distinguish

between military leaders giving testimony or professional assessments for what is required to provide security from his or her lobbying on behalf of the current administration.<sup>59</sup>

The current war on terrorism and the military's focus on irregular warfare is forcing military leaders to consider the strategic implications of their decisions causing a merger of political and military objectives. Under peace-time conditions, the military is required to explain the demands of future combat and the risks entailed in failing to meet those demands, and the civilian policy makers are more focused on near-term challenges that are of immediate concern to the public.<sup>60</sup> During time of war, the civilian policy makers will increase their involvement in military strategy, and the military's role in national affairs will increase. As depicted early in the historical examples, the relationship between the civilian leaders and their military advisors will impact the effective management of the unclear line between policy and strategy. Additionally, the military's role in political and economic tasks necessary for the restoration of political order during the conduct of stability operations has also forced military leaders to assume responsibilities normally reserved for their civilian counterparts.<sup>61</sup> This creates friction at the lower levels of civil-military relations as the military maintains the mission that is normally led by civilians.

The current war on terrorism has cast doubts on the military's ability to fight an unconventional enemy, and that has sparked outward dissent towards the failure of the military advisors to prepare for this fight and dissent towards the civilian leaders for not listening to their military advisors regarding required troop strength. The current relationship has been complicated due to the election of a new President as he is faced with political pressures to stop putting men and women of the United States in danger. The nation is in a transitional period for civil-military relations that could develop into any of the historical examples described in this

paper. The President's timely, effective management of the political expectations of the war and the abundance of military advisement he receives will set the tone for future civil-military relations during the remainder of his tour and the war on terrorism. As Clausewitz would suggest, civil-military relations during wartime will be increasingly complicated when the relations between the government, military, and people is not balanced.<sup>62</sup> The current personalities involved in the nation's civil-military relationship will determine which historical model will be emulated and whether or not a civilian-directed strategy with military advisement will become the standard for all future national security policy.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

It is not possible to predict or control the personalities that will drive future civil-military relations, but the military can assume an aggressive effort in making the role of an advisor a more integral part of its professional development. The military can effectively implement a cultural change to expand the view of their role in the larger picture much like the recent development of joint professionals. Currently in the military, the security professional is the least accepted of the three outlined by Feaver, and the assignment to those duties is associated to a personal agenda or deviation from the expected career path. The military needs to establish professional norms, standards, and expectations for military leaders to prepare them for their advisor role. This could be instituted by requiring billets which expose military leaders to the national security decision making process as a prerequisite for advancement much like the joint billet requirement for all General Officers. Having senior military officers with expertise in the existing political culture will provide the civilian leaders with a more trusted, effective advisor. Furthermore, this enhanced professional experience will allow the senior military leader to utilize their service and joint professional experience to provide the political leader with the

optimum military solution. This recommended cultural change cannot be limited to the General Officer level, as today's Company Grade Officer consistently works with civilian representatives from the State Department during the conduct of stability operations.

It is imperative that the existing professional military education (PME) program be adjusted to increase the young military leader's exposure to civil-military relations. With limited time and unlimited training objectives, it is not practical to simply add a civil-military training block to existing curriculums. However, current topics such as ethics, leadership, and military history all provide the instructors with opportunities to discuss the connection to civil-military relations. The focus at the Company Grade level should be on educating the military leaders on topics such as political affiliation, public insubordination to elected public officials, and the military's social influence and how they impact civil-military relations. Additional PME will also prepare the junior military leader to appropriately react to public statements heard by non-practicing professionals as well as develop a better understanding of the role of his or her civilian counterparts. The current professional reading list should be expanded to include literature on civil-military relations at the Company and Field Grade levels. *American Civil-Military Relations: The Soldier and the State in a New Era*, edited by Suzanne Nielson and Don Snider, is a contemporary collaboration by renowned scholars from the fields of political science, history, policy studies, and sociology that would be a quality addition and serve as the foundation for any future civil-military studies. The Field Grade PME should include more professional exposure to the techniques of the military advisor, speakers with civil-military relations experience, as well as civilian expectations of their military advisor. The military's growth in joint professionalism is greatly enhanced by the joint nature of the resident schools, and the same effect can be achieved in the security professional realm. The civilian's exposure to the military



training will increase his relationship with the military, and the shared experiences and training will create a cultural bond that will bridge personality conflicts and reinforce the legitimacy of civilian direction. Education will prepare military leaders to address all problems inherent in civil-military relations.

Building an institutional understanding of civil-military relations will help build the trust required for the relationship to produce effective national security strategy. Military leaders must assume that their civilian leaders come into their positions with preconceived views on the military culture and agendas, as well as sensitivity to the recent public criticism levied by retired military leaders. A military leader's open, candid communication and avoidance of any "shirking" activity is essential in reinforcing the military's subordination to its civilian leaders. As Richard Kohn suggests, the military officer should always "speak up but not out," and it is up to the political leader if he or she wants to voice the military leader's concerns in a public forum.<sup>63</sup> A unified message is required due to the volatile nature of the American public.

Military leaders must recognize that retirement is not a resignation of their commission and the military needs to educate transitioning General Officers on the negative impact of their public statements. After 30 years of dedicated service to the nation's security, it is doubtful they would knowingly undermine the professionalism of the military. Civil-military disagreements are not always unhealthy but any public exposure of a perceived disconnect between elected officials and the military will degrade the reputation of both professions. During required testimonies to Congress, the military advisor must ensure that prior coordination with his civilian leaders occurs in order to minimize the perception of a political ploy to leverage the dual control of the military. Furthermore, trust can be built by educating the civilian leaders on military matters, because knowing why someone is responding a certain way is normally more important

than the response. A combination of objective and subjective control is required in today's civil-military environment as there is no way to establish the required trust and professional competence without the military integration and education of the political decision making process. However, the military needs to remain an apolitical servant to the state which remains committed to the Constitution they swore to defend.

## CONCLUSION

Political institutions normally fall short of their values, but the military has maintained a favorable status in society due to its autonomy from politics. Continued political involvement by military leaders will negatively impact the legitimacy and status of the military, and focusing solely on security will limit the military leader's understanding of the factors that influence the civilian policy maker. Today's military professional cannot be political but he or she needs to understand the political implications of their actions, and this can only be accomplished through extensive education and experience. To shape norms conducive to effective civil-military relations requires increased professionalism by U.S. military leaders in order to effectively serve as political advisors.

The United States was founded upon the creation of a military that is subordinate to the nation's civilian leaders, and everything in today's military realm is derived from that relationship. Faced with a democracy fueled by constant turnover of key civilian leaders, today's military professional must be prepared to recognize the institutional and personal factors that contribute to each new civil-military relationship. With a complete understanding of their role in the civil-military relationship, the historical and theoretical background of that relationship, and the inherent perceptions of their civilian leaders; today's military advisor can effectively influence a professional relationship which is vital to the integration of policy and military strategy.

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- <sup>1</sup> Kohn, Richard H. "Coming soon: Crisis in civil military relations," *World Affairs* (Winter 2008): 76.
- <sup>2</sup> Clausewitz, Carl von. *On War* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 20.
- <sup>3</sup> Huntington, Samuel P. *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957), 58.
- <sup>4</sup> Clausewitz, 254-555.
- <sup>5</sup> Huntington, 82.
- <sup>6</sup> Neilson, Suzanne C and Snider, Don M. *American Civil-Military Relations: The Soldier and the State in a New Era* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2009), 264.
- <sup>7</sup> Huntington, 72.
- <sup>8</sup> Neilson, Snider, 157.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid, 307.
- <sup>10</sup> Lefebvre, Stephanie. "Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations," *Air Power History* (Winter 2004): 57.
- <sup>11</sup> Neilson, Snider, 269.
- <sup>12</sup> Noonan, Michael P. "Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations," *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* ( Summer 2004): 160.
- <sup>13</sup> Bland, Douglass L. "A Unified Theory Of Civil-Military Relations," *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 26, No. 1, (Fall 1999):7-26.
- <sup>14</sup> Janowitz, Morris. *The Professional Soldier, a Social and Political Portrait* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1960).
- <sup>15</sup> Schiff, Rebecca L. *The Military and Domestic Politics: A concordance theory of civil-military relations* ( New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2009), 32.
- <sup>16</sup> Clausewitz, 30
- <sup>17</sup> Neilson, Snider, 3.
- <sup>18</sup> Hoffman, Frank. "Bridging the civil-military gap," *Armed Forces Journal* (December 2007) : 1.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid, 1.
- <sup>20</sup> Wirtz, James L. "A review essay of H. R. McMaster's Dereliction of Duty." *Political Science Quarterly* (Spring 1999) 133.
- <sup>21</sup> Yingling, Paul. "A failure in generalship," *Armed Forces Journal* (May 2007), 1.

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- <sup>22</sup>, Robert L. and Rosenbach, William E. and Rosenbach, Eric B. *Military Leadership: In Pursuit of Excellence* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2009), 207.
- <sup>23</sup> Bacevich, Andrew J. *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced By War With A New Afterword* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 40.
- <sup>24</sup> Feaver, Peter D and Kohn Richard H. *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2001), 435.
- <sup>25</sup> Neilson, Snider, 249.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid, 157.
- <sup>27</sup> Desch, Michael C. *Civilian Control of the Military: The Changing Security Environment* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins Press, 1999), 30
- <sup>28</sup> Feaver, Peter D. *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003), 300.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid, 184.
- <sup>30</sup> Bacevich, Andrew J. *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced By War With A New Afterword*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 63.
- <sup>31</sup> Neilson, Snider, 60
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid, 55.
- <sup>33</sup> Kohn, "Coming soon: Crisis in civil military relations," 69.
- <sup>34</sup> Huntington, 66.
- <sup>35</sup> Finer, S. E. *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), 21.
- <sup>36</sup> Snider, Don M. "Dissent and Strategic Leadership of the Military Professions," *Orbis*, (Spring 2008) 264.
- <sup>37</sup> Feaver, Peter D and Kohn Richard H. *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2001), 409.
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid, 422.
- <sup>39</sup> Neilson, Snider, 200.
- <sup>40</sup> Feaver, Peter D and Kohn Richard H. 409.
- <sup>41</sup> Kohn, Richard H. *Tarnished Brass: Is the U.S. Military Profession in Decline?* *World Affairs*, Spring 2009. 74.
- <sup>42</sup> Neilson, Snider, 157.

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- <sup>43</sup> Desch, Michael C. *Civilian Control of the Military: The Changing Security Environment* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins Press, 1999), 3.
- <sup>44</sup> Huntington, 84.
- <sup>45</sup> Neilson, Snider, 44.
- <sup>46</sup> Bacevich, Andrew J. *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced By War With A New Afterword.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 152.
- <sup>47</sup> Neilson, Snider, 21.
- <sup>48</sup> Kohn, Richard H. *Tarnished Brass: Is the U.S. Military Profession in Decline?*, 77.
- <sup>49</sup> Neilson, Snider, 216.
- <sup>50</sup> Kohn, *Tarnished Brass: Is the U.S. Military Profession in Decline?*, 79.
- <sup>51</sup> Feaver, Peter D and Kohn Richard H. *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2001), 427.
- <sup>52</sup> Snider, 271.
- <sup>53</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence F. "Generals used to be neutral: Officer Politics," *The New Republic*, (September 13 and 20 2004): 25.
- <sup>54</sup> Neilson, Snider, 234
- <sup>55</sup> Feaver, Kohn 464.
- <sup>56</sup> Huntington, 354.
- <sup>57</sup> Neilson, Snider, 234.
- <sup>58</sup> Huntington, Samuel P. *American Politics: the Promise of Disharmony.* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1981), 125.
- <sup>59</sup> Huntington, 180.
- <sup>60</sup> Robert L. and Rosenbach, William E. and Rosenbach, Eric B. *Military Leadership: In Pursuit of Excellence* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2009), 183.
- <sup>61</sup> Neilson, Snider, 112.
- <sup>62</sup> Clausewitz, 30.
- <sup>63</sup> Neilson, Snider, 276.

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